

Tale *Feathers*

March 2003

Volume 70

Number 3

Native Landscaping for Wildlife and People

March 27, 2003 Joint Meeting with Sierra Club-Eastern Missouri Group

Native Landscaping for Wildlife and People: How to Use Native Midwestern Plants to Beautify Your Property and Benefit Wildlife, was just published this past Spring by the Missouri Department of Conservation under the authorship of Dave Tylka. The book is an essential tool for anyone interested in trading the typical exotic species-filled, energy-consuming home landscape for one that benefits our native wildlife, saves energy, and feeds your spirit. Dave will provide an overview of the book including the awesome photos, the easy step-by-step instructions, and handy tables of native plant species. Copies of the book will be available for sale before and after the presentation.



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Dave Tylka is a biology professor at St. Louis Community College at Meramec. Prior to teaching, Dave spent 14 years as a wildlife biologist with the Missouri Department of Conservation. He has served on the board of directors of several conservation organizations and in 2001 was elected to the Audubon Society National Board.

The meeting will be held at 7:30 on Thursday, March 27 at Litzinger School-on the east side of Lindbergh, 1 mile south of Hwy-40. All are welcome to meet the speaker for dinner anytime after 5:30 at Elsay's Landing in Plaza Frontenac.

St. Louis Audubon Society

Volunteers

PLEASE JOIN US

Please join us for the next newsletter mailing party on March 21, 2003. Call Anne Bolte at (314)832-0938 or Bill Salsgiver at (636)225-1490 for details

OOPS!!!

The phone number for Master Naturalist information was incorrect in the last issue. It should be 314-984-7777.

Two Rivers NWR Work Day March 8

Join us on Saturday, March 8 as we work to restore the natural character of the Gilbert Lake area of Two Rivers National Wildlife Refuge outside Grafton, Illinois.

This will be our only work day this spring and there is plenty to keep us busy. From general maintenance tasks to trash clean up to willow removal-the bigger the group, the more we get done.

This comes right before the 100th anniversary celebration of the National Wildlife Refuge System so let's make it a good showing while helping to make this habitat more habitable for its wild residents.

We will work from 10a to 2p, with lunch afterward in Grafton. Bring gloves, boots, and drinking water.

Call Mitch Leachman at (314) 739-5112 for more info and to sign up.

Member Profiles

Jerry Miller has been an active member or Board Member for more than 22 years and previously served as President from 1982-1984.

Describe your educational background.

I have a Bachelor's degree, with a major in Elementary Education, from Nebraska Wesleyan University.

Describe your current occupation.

Presently semi-retired after working for 20 years as a professional Boy Scout and 15 years as Executive Director of the Safety Council of Greater St. Louis. Currently still involved with the Child Passenger Safety Seat Program at St. Louis Children's Hospital and as a volunteer with the Child Fatality Prevention Coalition of St. Louis.

What is your current function/role with SLAS?

I currently serve on the Finance and Nominating Committees of the Board of Directors.

What is your #1 conservation concern at any level, from local to global?

My greatest concern is that present and future generations leave as much of the Natural World untouched so future populations can enjoy the same or similar experiences I have had.

In what ways can NAS or SLAS address this concern?

We at St. Louis Audubon need to continue to find the interested volunteers and financing to further the education of the entire Metropolitan community.



What is your long-term vision/goals for SLAS?

To fund an office and staff free of politics and who can involve an increasing number of people in our quest to preserve the Natural World.

National Wildlife Refuge System Centennial Celebration

Program and Bird Walk at Two Rivers NWR on March 15

On March 14, 1903, President Theodore Roosevelt ordered that a small shell- and mangrove-covered island in Florida's Indian River be forever protected as a "preserve and breeding ground for native birds." Paul Kroegel, a local man, was hired to watch over the 3-acre sanctuary named Pelican Island Bird Reservation. His mission was clear: protect the island's pelicans from poachers and plume hunters. With this simple promise of wildlife protection, the National Wildlife Refuge System was born. A century later, the refuge system has grown to nearly 94 million acres and includes more than 530 refuges-at least one in every state.

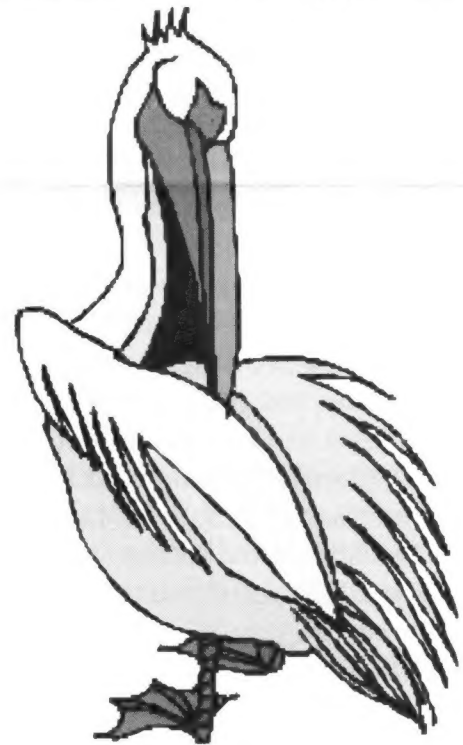
The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USF&WS) manages the System under federal guidelines that make conservation of fish, wildlife, and plants the primary objective. This has created a nationwide network of true sanctuaries unrivaled throughout the world in size and scope of wildlife protection. Also, this sets the Refuge System apart from other federal lands where recreation, hunting, and resource extraction compete with wildlife for resources and habitat.

Two Rivers NWR was created in 1958 and includes over 8,500 acres of important land and water areas near the confluence of the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers. The refuge is an important link in the chain of resting, feeding, and wintering areas for birds migrating along the Mississippi Flyway. More than 200 species of birds funnel through this area on their fall migration including over 5,000,000 ducks and 50,000 geese.

Come join the Two Rivers Refuge staff and volunteers on Saturday, March 15 to celebrate the 100th birthday of this awesome example of America's commitment to our natural heritage. The day begins at 10 a.m. at the Refuge headquarters with the World Bird Sanctuary presenting a program on bird conservation, burial of a 100-year time capsule and refreshments.

The day continues with a bird walk for all experience levels, beginning at 12:30 p.m. and led by volunteers from the St. Louis Audubon Society. Several areas of the refuge will be visited providing a variety of waterfowl, songbirds, and raptors. There will be some walking on level gravel roads and some birding from the car. Please be sure to bring a lunch and something to drink.

To get to refuge headquarters, take Highway 100 North from Alton, Illinois, through Grafton, Illinois to the Brussels Ferry. Take the ferry across the Illinois River (the ferry is free) and follow the River Road for 4.5 miles to a right turn at the Refuge sign. Continue for 1 mile to the headquarters building. For questions on the bird walk, contact Joe Eades at 314-966-3171. For information on the rest of the activities, contact the Refuge staff at 618-883-2524.



Forget the Groundhog, Spring is Here!!

Jim Malone

Ahhh March! The first inklings of Spring. Wildflowers begin to show their early colors, and the birds begin moving North (between nasty Alberta clippers). In the St. Louis area, this time is a bit early for most passerines to be back (although there are always the early scouts), but waterfowl, gulls, raptors, and shorebirds can be really interesting this time of year. This is also a good time to begin sharpening those bird song skills. Get the bird tapes out from under the bed and dust them off. Just as we did last month, we are now listing Sunday walks offered as joint ventures connecting the birding skills of WGNSS and St. Louis Audubon trip leaders. Come on out and join us as we look for frustrating shorebirds, mysterious gulls, and brightly-plumed (hey, the easy one) waterfowl.

March 9, (Sunday) Riverlands EDA 8:00 AM Join Tom Parmeter at the Teal Pond for a look at one of our favorite birding locations for much of the year. You could get a look at Dowitchers, Snipe, American Golden Plover, lots of waterfowl, Raptors, and maybe even the elusive Short-eared Owls which might come back North from where-ever it was they ran off to for the winter.

March 15, (Saturday) Busch/Weldon Springs, 8:00 AM Join Paul Bauer and I while we give Busch C.A. the once-over. We will visit some of the best sites within Busch and probably include some of the Weldon Springs area as well. Early Passerines like Pine Warblers, winter residents like Red-breasted Nuthatches, and departing migrants like Brown Creeper are possible on this trip as well as most of the things mentioned above for Riverlands. Meet at the Hampton parking lot just to the left after you enter the area.

March 16, (Sunday) Horseshoe Lake, 8:00 AM Joe Eades will lead this trip to Horseshoe lake. This is a very good time of year for this location! The great variety of waterfowl, Loons, Grebes, passerines, Sparrows, and others are possible here. This trip will meet at Horseshoe Lake state park (Highway 111) in the first parking lot on the right after entering the park.

March 23, (Sunday) Horseshoe Lake, 8:00 AM John and Nancy Solodar will be leading this visit to Horseshoe Lake. Although the likely birds are similar to the previous week, this is the time of the year when things change very rapidly. Especially if there is a front blowing things in from the South. Meet John and Nancy at the pavillion at the end of the causeway to Walker island at Horseshoe Lake State Park.

March 29, (Saturday) Creve Coeur Lake and Little Creve Coeur Lake, 8:00 AM Various leaders will be on hand to lead you through a look at a local wetlands in early spring. Come see how the marshy areas wake up in the spring, and you might even learn something! Meet at the Mallard Lake building (old Hale Irwin Driving Range) on Creve Coeur Mill Road.

March 30, (Sunday) Castlewood State Park, 8:00 AM Castlewood is another of those areas that "wakes up" a bit earlier than most of the St. Louis area in the spring. On this trip you should be able to see Fish Crows, nesting Red Shouldered Hawks, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, early Warblers, Shorebirds, and lots of other cool birds and wildflowers. Come join us for this early spring look at the park. Meet at the large parking area just before the stream.

April 6, (Sunday) Busch C. A, 4:00 PM This is our world-famous (OK, kind of well known locally) Woodcock/Owl Prowl. This trip is always lots of fun, and this year we are re-kindling an old WGNSS tradition, a picnic before the birdwalk! Bring your picnic goodies, and we will have hot coals on hand if you want to grill. Come get to know your fellow birders a bit better, and see some Woodcocks and Owls in the process. Meet in the pavillion near the Fallen Oak trail.

April 13, (Saturday) Carlyle Lake, 8:00 AM This is a great location any time of the year! Join the man who knows Carlyle birds better than anyone, Dan Kassebaum, as he leads you all over the Carlyle area for the best of the season. Meet Dan at the Carlyle McDonald's on Highway 127 North of Carlyle. This should be a great day!

So there you have it. There is no reason to sit at home and feel blah as the last spurts of winter die out. Come on out and join us in the best birding locations with the best leaders, and see if we can make something happen!

Conservation Report

Sue Gustafson, Vice President Conservation

St. Louis Conservation Forum -- On March 31, the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) is hosting a regional conservation forum in order to strengthen conservation/environmental efforts in Missouri with organizations such as St. Louis Audubon Society. Participants will have an opportunity to share their organization's conservation issues in an effort to work with MDC to "enhance the region's quality of life." I will be representing St. Louis Audubon, and we have been asked to list and rank our organization's top five conservation issues. I will be indicating such issues as: increase the emphasis on non-game bird habitat management on MDC-owned conservation areas, get the Missouri Bird Conservation Initiative off the ground by moving from a planning stage to an implementation stage, minimize habitat disturbance on MDC-owned areas during avian breeding season (as well as encouraging the same on private lands via MDC's Private Lands Division), and maintain the objectives and focus of the Natural History Division amidst the current divisional/organizational changes taking place within MDC. If any of our members have other conservation priorities that they would like for me to emphasize at the forum, please contact me at 314-968-8128 or smgustafson@juno.com with your ideas. I'll report back next month with the highlights of the forum.

Upcoming International Migratory Bird Week festivities -- Be on the lookout for the colored flyer insert in next month's *Talefeathers* which will list the activities planned for International Migratory Bird Week May 4 - 11. Activities will include numerous bird walks at some of the area's best migration hot spots, along with a day of family activities at the St. Louis Zoo on May 10. A special preview event is being planned at Powder Valley Nature Center in mid-April to wet your appetite for seeing those colorful spring migrants. Bring a friend - it's the best time to get hooked on birding!

Your Invitation is in the Mail!

Members of the National Audubon Society in our state will be invited to gather at Powder Valley Nature Center in Kirkwood, Missouri, on March 1, 2003. Saint Louis Audubon Society will be hosting this annual event.

Under the theme, *The Vision of One Audubon*, the meeting will feature Dan McGuiness, Director of the NAS Upper Mississippi River Campaign and Tony Robyn, Executive Director of the Joplin Audubon Center, to name a few. After a delicious lunch, catered by Hendri's, concurrent sessions discussions will include: IBA's (Important Bird Areas), State Conservation Forum, the Joplin Audubon Center as the new Audubon Center Model, and Chapter Fundraising.

The gathering will begin at 9:30 am and adjourn at 4:00 pm. The cost will be \$20/individual and \$35/couple.

Please plan on attending this conference and meet other members from around the state! Look for the registration flyer in your mailbox soon!

QUESTIONS? Call the Audubon Missouri State Office at 573-447-2249

The Future of Conservation in Missouri

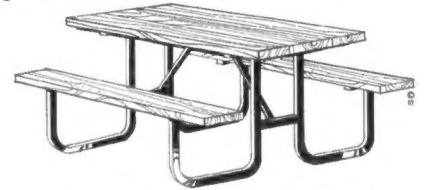
John Hoskins, MDC Director, to Speak at Annual Meeting on April 13

Register now for St. Louis Audubon Society's Annual Meeting at the Webster Groves Recreation Complex on Sunday, April 13, 2003. Our speaker this year will be John D. Hoskins, seventh director of the Missouri Department of Conservation. Sworn in on July 1, 2002, Director Hoskins is continuing a career that began with the Department in 1977. He has served as a conservation agent, regional protection supervisor, chief of general services and most recently as protection division administrator.

2:00 p.m.-Hendri's will serve a lunch buffet, including drinks and dessert.

3:00 p.m.-we will have a short business meeting, including presentation of awards and the election of the Board.

3:30 p.m.-Director Hoskins will discuss the future challenges of conservation in Missouri, including a growing suburban population that is becoming isolated from conservation concerns and a Department that is being challenged by a variety of non-conservation tasks while facing intense budget pressures.



The afternoon is open to all, but only current SLAS members will be allowed to vote in the Board election. The cost is just \$15 per person-a slight increase over last year due to the facility rental fee. Reservations are required-please use the form below.

You can easily reach the Recreation Complex at 33 E. Glendale from I-44. Take the Elm Street exit south and make the first left at the Complex sign.

Annual Audubon Meeting Registration Form

Please mail this form or a copy with payment by check to:
Mitch Leachman, 11340 Gardenvue Ln, #1, St. Ann, MO 63074
Make check payable to St. Louis Audubon Society.

Name(s)

\$15.00 x _____ = _____
Fee No. Total Enclosed

Prairie Chicken Extravaganza Now Loading

Jim Malone

This year on April 10-12, St. Louis Audubon Society will be offering a very special trip to central Missouri for Prairie Chickens and a whole lot more. This year, we have added Thursday to the outing so that we can also visit some of the best birding locations in South Central Missouri to look for early warblers, shorebirds, Raptors, passerines, waterfowl, and other goodies. Thursday we will allow the morning for driving time, then spend the afternoon birding Schell-Osage C.A.. You may recognize this as the place where a Lewis' Woodpecker spent the 2001-2002 winter, but it's much more than just that. Later that day (if time permits) we will make a quick foray to Taberville Prairie for evening activities at that location. The next morning, we will visit Four Rivers Conservation area looking for shorebirds, passerines, and anything else that flies by (like the dozen American Pipets we saw last year). Later in the day we will drive North and visit Paintbrush Prairie, then spend the night in Sedalia. Saturday morning we will get up really early (yup, REALLY early) and drive to Hi Lonesome Prairie before sunrise. Here we will get out and quietly assemble in the area where Greater Prairie Chickens have been doing their unique dancing and singing for years. After viewing the chickens (and some other prairie species like Henslow's Sparrows) we will visit Mora C.A. and walk a bit in search of other Sparrows, and wandering passerines. We will make one more pass at Hi Lonesome to see if the Upland Sandpipers are awake. These birds share the same space with the Prairie Chickens, but tend to be more active a bit later in the day. Finally, we make our way back to Sedalia for a well-deserved brunch. After eating, we move on to Columbia, MO where we visit Eagle Bluffs C.A. again looking for waterfowl, raptors, shorebirds, and maybe even a few swallows. If time is still available, we end the day at Bradford Farms on the East side of Columbia. This location is the Spring and Fall migration home to a group of Smith's Longspurs and several other interesting birds, and can be quite a surprising area. If you are interested in this trip, contact Jim Malone at stlaud@surfbest.net or by phone at (636) 536-1119 to reserve a spot on this trip. We will make motel arrangements and have cost details when we talk. Hurry though, as this trip will be limited to about 24 participants, and it fills fast.



Tale Feathers

Tale Feathers is published monthly by the St. Louis Audubon Society. Messenger Printing prints 2,500 copies of each newsletter on recycled paper using soy ink. Anne Bolte edits the newsletter.

St. Louis Audubon Society 2002 - 2003

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Attention!

The deadline for the April issue is **March 10**. Send inquiries to Anne by E-mail ambolte@swbell.net phone 314.832.0938 post 6939 Sharp St. Louis, MO 63116

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This form makes you a member of **both** the National and St. Louis Audubon.

Audubon is a membership organization dedicated to protecting birds, other wildlife, and their habitats. Our members are the source of our volunteer strength and the foundation of our financial support. By becoming a member, you will receive National Audubon Society's magazine as well as the St. Louis Audubon Society newsletter, *Tale Feathers*.

St. Louis Audubon Society Membership Form

Membership category desired:

- ☐ Introductory / \$20
☐ Special two-year Introductory / \$30
☐ Sr. Citizen / Student / \$15
☐ Local Chapter / \$15 Make checks payable
to SLAS and send to above address

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Please support your local chapter. Use this form to join or renew.